

Creek ReLeaf Program

Reforesting Frederick County



**FREDERICK COUNTY OFFICE
OF SUSTAINABILITY AND
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**



(Stream with no buffer)

WHAT IS THE CREEK RELEAF PROGRAM?

Frederick County's Creek ReLeaf Program is a multi-year reforestation program geared towards replanting trees on both private and public lands to provide stormwater control, reduce temperature impacts on County streams, and to provide impervious equivalent credits towards the County's MS4 Permit in stream buffer areas which are lacking trees.

WHAT IS A STREAM BUFFER?

A stream buffer, or riparian buffer, is a strip of land on either side of a waterway that is vegetated with trees, shrubs, or grasses. Stream buffers typically have a high water table and experience periodic flooding.

Stream buffers provide a transition between upland and aquatic environments, provide shade that will moderate water temperatures, improve fish and wildlife habitat and trap and filter nutrients and sediments from adjacent lands before entering the stream.

In addition, stream buffers also prevent stream bank erosion by providing stabilization and reduce the potential for flooding.

Frederick County will plant the stream buffer area with native trees and shrubs at no cost to the landowner through conservation easements.

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

As part of the Creek ReLeaf program, Frederick County will place a conservation easement on the area of land that is reforested, which will protect the riparian buffer in perpetuity. Frederick County will monitor the easement to ensure the land is adequately protected.

Conservation easements are legal agreements between a landowner and a local government or land trust that permanently limit certain uses of the land to protect the conservation values. The landowner still owns and uses the land under an easement as long as the use does not violate the terms of the easement. The easement is permanent, even if the landowner sells the property or passes it to heirs.

Landowners will receive up to \$9,000 per acre of land under a conservation easement.

Frederick County will provide maintenance, including mowing and weed control, during the first five years of growth. The landowner is responsible for maintaining the reforested area thereafter.



(Great reforestation opportunity to connect two forests)



(Newly planted reforestation field)

PRIORITIZATION OF PROPERTIES:

The following factors will be considered when prioritizing sites for reforestation:

- Number of acres proposed to be reforested (minimum of 2 acres over a single or multiple properties)
- Potential to expand or connect existing forests
- Proximity to a stream with high or poor water quality
- Presence of Brook Trout within the watershed
- Access to site for planting, maintenance, and long-term monitoring
- Presence of the nearby restoration efforts to improve watershed health
- Site outside of the following jurisdictions: Brunswick, Emmitsburg, Frederick City, Middletown, Mount Airy, Myersville, Thurmont, and Walkersville.

PRIOR TO APPLYING

Interested property owners should do the following prior to applying for the program:

- Determine the area proposed to be reforested
- Review the proposed permanent conservation easement
- Know where any easements are located on the property
- Know where the septic field is (if present on property)

Reforestation will not be allowed in:

- Existing easements such as water, sewer, power lines, etc.
- Existing or proposed septic fields
- Existing agricultural easements where conflict may occur

Landowners who participate in the **Creek ReLeaf** program will help make a lasting impact on local stream and watershed health by reducing pollution and enhancing wildlife habitat!

FIND OUT MORE!

For more information about the Creek ReLeaf Program, contact the Office of Sustainability and Environmental Resources at 301-600-1350, or visit www.frederickcountymd.gov/reforest